



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING AGENDA
JUNE 1, 2026 AT 11:45 AM
HJEMKOMST CENTER AUDITORIUM - 202 1ST AVE N**

Disclaimer: Voting requirements may be subject to changes in the law, parliamentary procedural matters, or other unforeseen issues. The City Attorney provides opinion on questions of voting requirements by the Moorhead City Code, Minnesota State Statutes, and parliamentary procedure.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Agenda Amendments
3. Approval of Minutes
 - A. May 4, 2026, Meeting Minutes
4. Citizens To Be Heard
5. Commissioners' Report
6. Presentations
 - A. Spark Center for Entrepreneurship — Laura Caroon, The Luminarie
 - B. Experiences & Placemaking — Steve French, Recreation Events Specialist, & Joe Burgum, Folkways
7. Business Items
 - A. Branding Downtown — Lisa Bode, Governmental Affairs Director
 - B. Economic Development Report
8. Information/Update
 - A. Spark Center for Entrepreneurship - [Link to Spark Center](#)
 - B. Downtown Moorhead Vision - [Link to More to Moorhead Website](#)
 - C. Building & Housing Updates - [Sign up for e-Notifications](#)
 - D. 11th Street Underpass Project - [Link to MnDOT Project Details & Updates](#)
9. Adjourn

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**MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HJEMKOMST CENTER AUDITORIUM - 202 1ST AVE N
MAY 4, 2026 - 11:45 AM**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Acting Chair Schlotfeldt called the meeting to order, and a roll call was taken.

Roll call of the members was made as follows:

Present (10): Siham Amedy, Amy Anderson, Evan Balko, Derrick LaPoint (attending virtually), Sheri Larson, Emily Moore, Jason Ness, Kim Schlotfeldt, Rob Sobolik, Deb White

Absent (0):

New members, Siham Amedy and Jason Ness, were introduced to the board. Both recently began their terms and were welcomed as the newest additions to the Economic Development Authority.

2. Agenda Amendments

There were no amendments to the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes

A. March 2, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve made by Emily Moore and seconded by Deb White.

For 10: Siham Amedy, Amy Anderson, Evan Balko, Derrick LaPoint, Sheri Larson, Emily Moore, Jason Ness, Kim Schlotfeldt, Rob Sobolik, Deb White

Against 0: None

Abstain/Recuse 0: None

Motion Passed

4. Citizens To Be Heard

Stacia Sytsma, Executive Director of the Greater Moorhead Business Association, provided an update on a recent MBA-hosted event. She also discussed ongoing efforts to develop resources for Moorhead businesses and strategies for effectively delivering those resources to local business owners. To learn more, visit their website at: <https://greatermba.org>.

5. Commissioners' Report

Commissioner Ness, Moorhead Public Service, provided an update on ongoing efforts throughout the city, including a current meter project designed to give residents improved access to their utility billing information.

Commissioner Schlotfeldt shared an overview of the Greater MBA's three- and five-year strategic planning in progress focused on supporting local business owners.

Joey Ness, Vice President of Business Development with the Greater Fargo

Moorhead Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC), was invited to the podium by Commission White and provided an update on business retention and expansion efforts. He outlined how the organization evaluates changing business needs, supports potential expansions, and works to attract skilled workers as the region's business community grows.

6. Presentations

A. 2026 Legislative Priorities — Lisa Bode, Governmental Affairs Director

Lisa Bode, Governmental Affairs Director, provided an update on the City of Moorhead priorities as the 2026 legislative session heads into its final hour. She highlighted two bills the city is hoping will pass: the bonding bill with funding for Moorhead's top priority of flood mitigation, and a tax bill with policy changes to the Border City Enterprise Zone statute.

Commissioners had detailed discussion.

7. Business Items

A. Emery Affordable Housing TIF - Annual Certification of Tenant Eligibility

Amy Thorpe, Economic Development Program Administrator, introduced the item and provided background on the project and requirements related to the housing TIF. She reported that the annual eligibility review had been completed, and all requirements were met, recommending acceptance of the report to finalize this year's compliance process.

Commissioner White asked about the number of vacancies in the building. Amy Thorpe noted that there were eight vacancies at the time of the review and clarified that once units are certified as affordable, they remain reserved for qualifying tenants.

B. Economic Development Report

Matt Leiseth, DMI/Economic Development, provided an overview of the Economic Development Report and highlighted the Essentia Health Clinic project planned for downtown Moorhead. He also noted that The Loop | Moorhead Public Library held its grand opening event on April 18.

8. Information/Update

A. Spark Center for Entrepreneurship - [Link to Spark Center](#)

B. Downtown Moorhead Vision - [Link to More to Moorhead Website](#)

C. Building & Housing Updates - [Sign up for e-Notifications](#)

D. 11th Street Underpass Project - [Link to MnDOT Project Details & Updates](#)

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:37 pm.

SPARK CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP





SPARK CENTER



SPARK CENTER

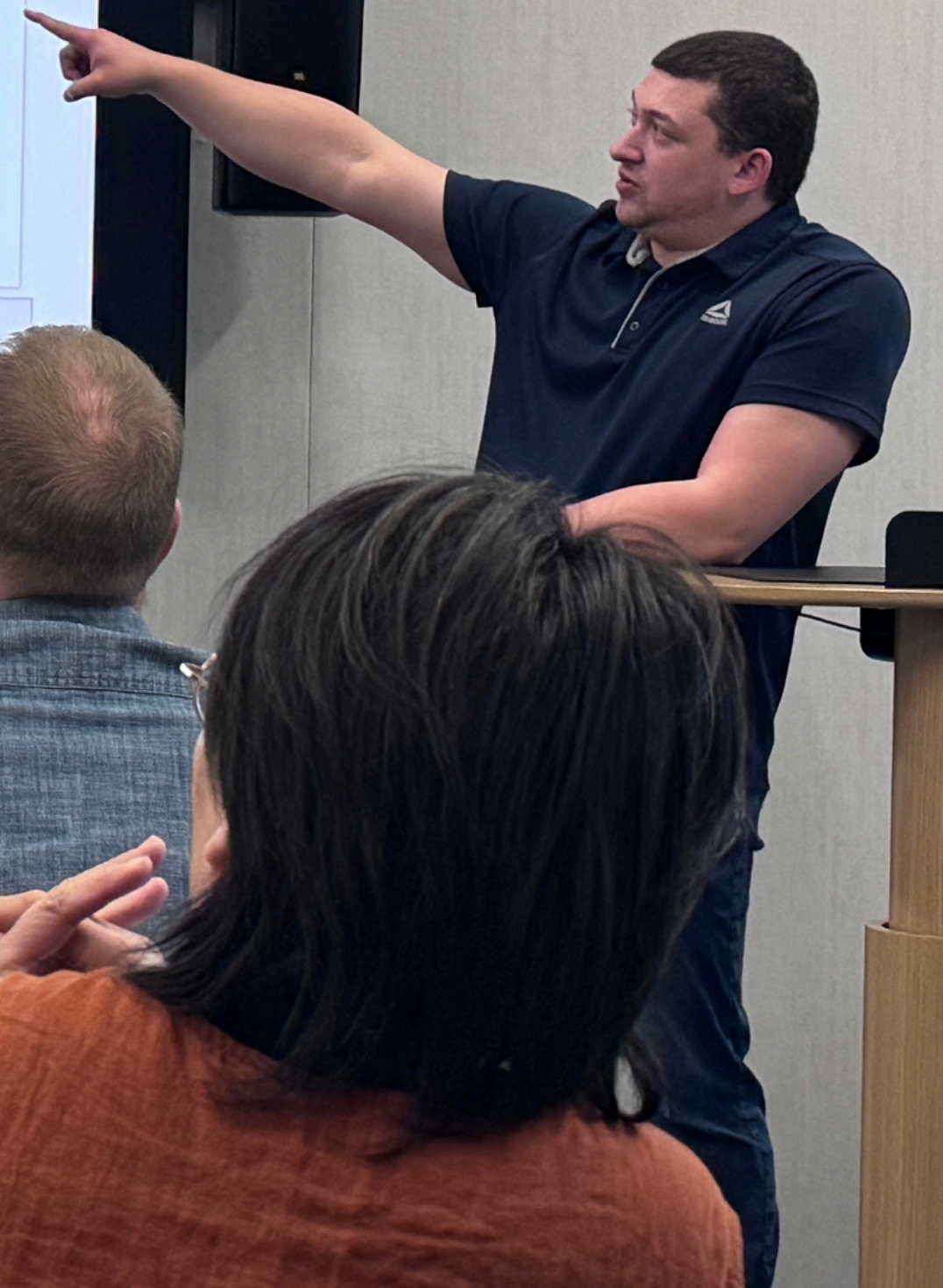


Your Quick-Win Checklist — Do These Today

These actions have the highest impact and can be completed in one sitting. Check them off and you will already be ahead of most competitors.

Foundation	Optimize Now	Build Momentum
<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Claim or verify your Google Business Profile□ Ensure your business name matches your signage exactly□ Confirm your address, phone, and website are correct□ Set your primary category to the most specific option available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Write a complete, specific 750-character business description□ List every service you offer with descriptions□ Add your complete hours including holidays□ Upload at least 10 photos (exterior, interior, team, work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Generate your review request link from the dashboard□ Ask 5 recent customers for a review this week□ Create your first Google Post□ Respond to every existing review on your profile

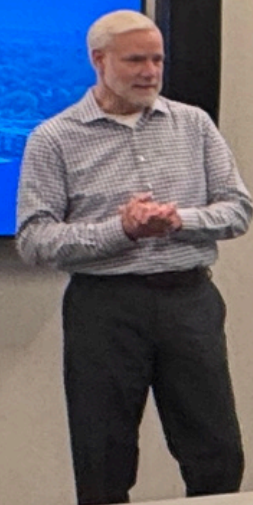
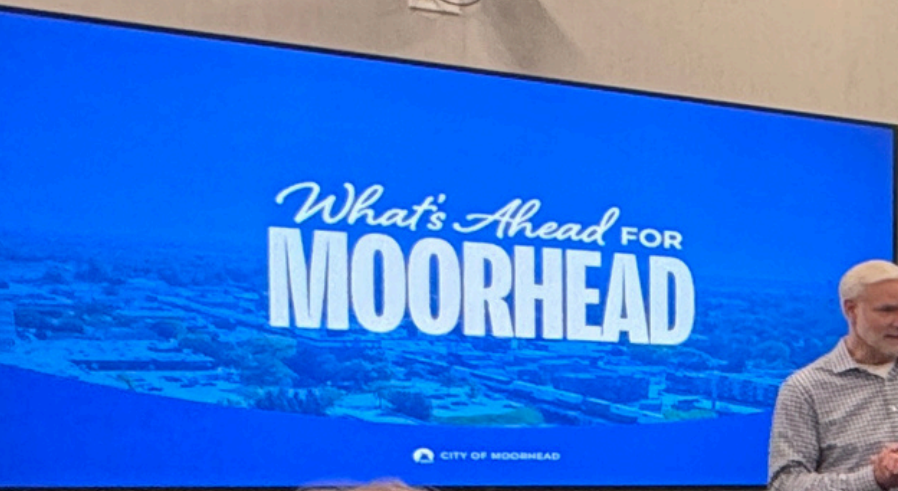
Your handout has the full checklist. You do not need to memorize this — take it home and work through it one section at a time.





HELLO
my name is
[Handwritten Name]
SPARK CENTER

HELLO
my name is
Leena
SPARK CENTER



EXIT







Wildly Possible

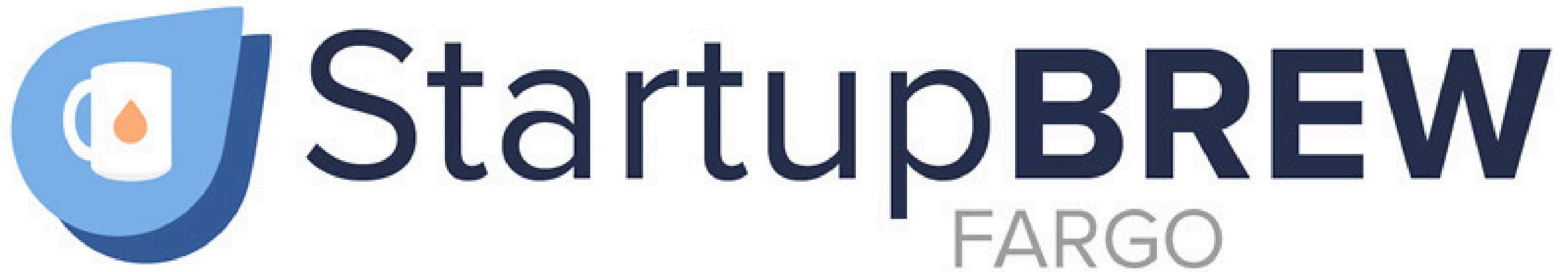
An entrepreneurship camp for
teen girls with big ideas.

June 29-30
Spark Center in The Loop

**SPARK
CENTER**
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Register and
learn more here!**



The logo features a blue teardrop shape on the left containing a white coffee cup with an orange flame above it. To the right, the text "Startup BREW" is written in a dark blue, sans-serif font, with "Startup" in lowercase and "BREW" in uppercase. Below "BREW", the word "FARGO" is written in a smaller, grey, uppercase font.

Startup BREW

FARGO

energized by  EMERGING
PRAIRIE

MOORHEAD SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Saad Janjua Insurance & Financial Services

In just a few short years, State Farm agent Saad Janjua has built more than an insurance office in Moorhead. He's built a community-centered business rooted in relationships, trust and service.

Located at 2510 20th Ave S, Saad Janjua Insurance & Financial Services opened in 2022 with a straightforward mission: to help people protect what matters most. The office offers



SAAD JANJUA
STATE FARM INSURANCE

home, auto, life and health insurance. But for Janjua, the work goes far beyond policies and paperwork.

"I have a deep gratitude for this community and love talking to people," Janjua shared. "This business allows me to combine my passion for serving others with my love for community engagement."

That sense of connection shows up in how he talks about both his team and



Saad Janjua participated in the Dilworth Safety Expo.

says, feel personal.

Janjua's ties to Moorhead run deep. A graduate of Minnesota State University Moorhead, he chose to start his business here as a way of giving back to the place that helped shape his path. "The community and the staff at the school

worked hard to build me up," he said. "When I had the opportunity to give back, I wanted to do it where it all started."

That commitment to community is also what sets his business apart. Guided by the motto "work, care, and know," Janjua empha-

sizes hard work, genuine care for clients, and a constant pursuit of knowledge. It's an approach that appears to resonate, reflected in hundreds of five-star reviews from local customers.

FREE COWORKING. WORKSHOPS. CONNECTIONS.

SPARK CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

THE LOOP

WHAT WOULD YOUR LOVE LETTER SAY?

MOORHEAD SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Mobile Floral Business Blossoms in Moorhead

In Moorhead, a new kind of floral experience is taking root—one built not just on beautiful blooms, but on healing, connection, and everyday moments of joy.

Bouquet Bar, founded in 2025 by Alyssa Berdahl, is a mobile floral business serving the Fargo-Moorhead area with custom arrangements, workshops, weddings, and interactive bouquet bar events. It's a business where stems become stories, and where flowers are used to help people feel seen, celebrated, and cared for.

For Berdahl, the business grew out of a deeply personal place. As a domestic violence survivor and sober mom, she found comfort in flowers during a difficult season of her life. What began as a simple act of self-care—arranging fresh stems on her kitchen counter—quickly became something more. Flowers, she discovered, could offer peace, hope, and a sense of beauty even in hard moments.

Encouraged by her husband to pursue her passion, Berdahl took a leap

and introduced the idea that would shape her business: micro bouquets. These small, thoughtfully designed arrangements make flowers more accessible for everyday life—not just special occasions. It's a simple but powerful concept: beauty doesn't have to wait.

From that initial spark, Bouquet Bar has grown into a multifaceted business offering everything from full-scale event florals to hands-on bouquet bar experiences where guests can design their own arrangements. Whether it's a wedding, a birthday, a sympathy arrangement, or a "just because" bouquet, each piece is created with intention and care.

"I love being part of meaningful moments in people's lives," Berdahl says. "Flowers have a way of helping people feel loved, appreciated, and connected."

That sense of connection extends beyond her customers and into the broader community. Berdahl chose to build her business in Moorhead because of its strong support



A floral display by the Bouquet Bar.



A bridal bouquet by the Bouquet Bar.

signing arrangements and styling events, every detail is handled with care. While the end result may look effortless, Berdahl is quick to point out the behind-the-scenes work that goes into each bouquet.

"Floral design is so much more than putting flowers together," she explains. "There's a lot of time, thought, and intention behind every arrangement." Looking ahead, Berdahl is excited to continue expanding Bouquet Bar through weddings, workshops, subscriptions, and partnerships with other local businesses. More than anything, she hopes to create more opportunities for people to gather, slow down, and connect.

Because at the end of the day, Bouquet Bar isn't just about flowers.

It's about the quiet message they carry: you

Alyssa Berdahl of Moorhead has turned her love of flowers into a mobile floral business, Bouquet Bar. (Photos/Spark Center for Entrepreneurship.)

matter, you're loved, and sometimes, a small moment of beauty can make all the difference.

This small business feature is part of an ongoing series by the Spark Center for Entrepreneurship, located inside The Loop in Moorhead. The Spark Center provides free coworking space, business workshops, networking events, meeting rooms, and support services for entrepreneurs and small business owners. Learn more at moorheadmn.gov/business-development/spark-center-for-entrepreneurship/

FREE COWORKING. WORKSHOPS. CONNECTIONS.

SPARK CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

THE LOOP

for small businesses and the genuine sense of collaboration among local entrepreneurs.

"There's a real desire here to see each other succeed," she says. "That makes it an

incredible place to grow something that's rooted in relationships."

What sets Bouquet Bar apart is the experience it offers. From sourcing and conditioning flowers to de-



What's Ahead FOR
MOORHEAD

CITY OF MOORHEAD

EXIT

MOORHEAD PLACEMAKING + EXPERIENCE MARKETING UPDATE



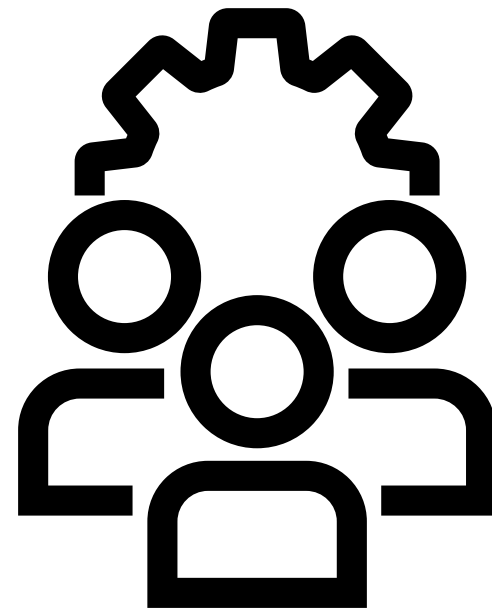
FOLKWAYS
YOU BELONG HERE

MOORHEAD CARES ABOUT PEOPLE AND PLACES

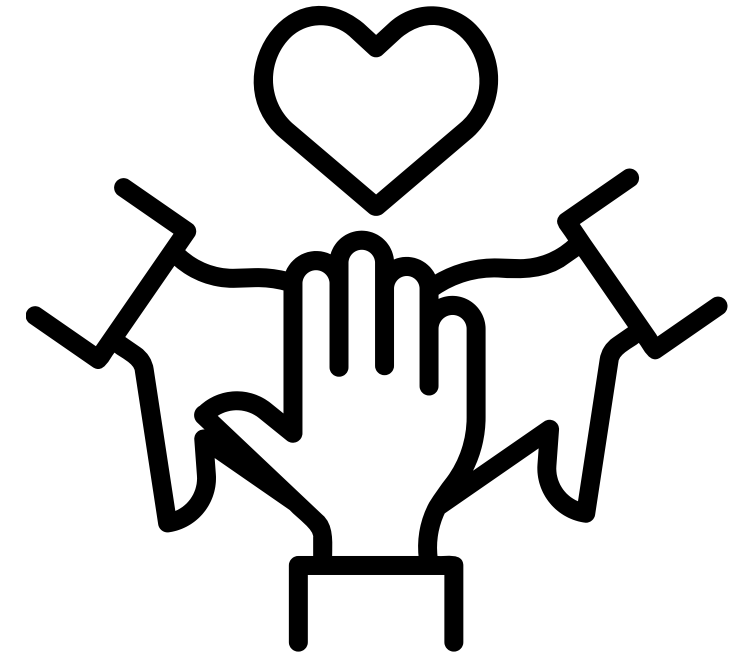
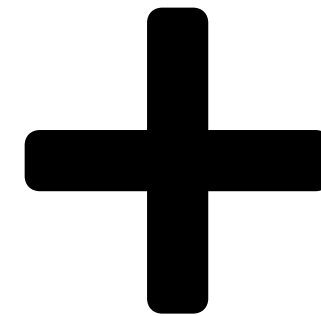
INVESTING IN:



Quality of Life



Workforce
Recruitment



Community
Well-being

PUT SIMPLY....

PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE
IN GREAT PLACES.

MOORHEAD DOWNTOWN PLAN

We can reimagine and build a Downtown **shaped by the aspirational values** the Moorhead community brought to the planning process.

VALUES:

- Authenticity
- Vibrancy
- Equity
- Inclusion
- Resilience
- Connectivity



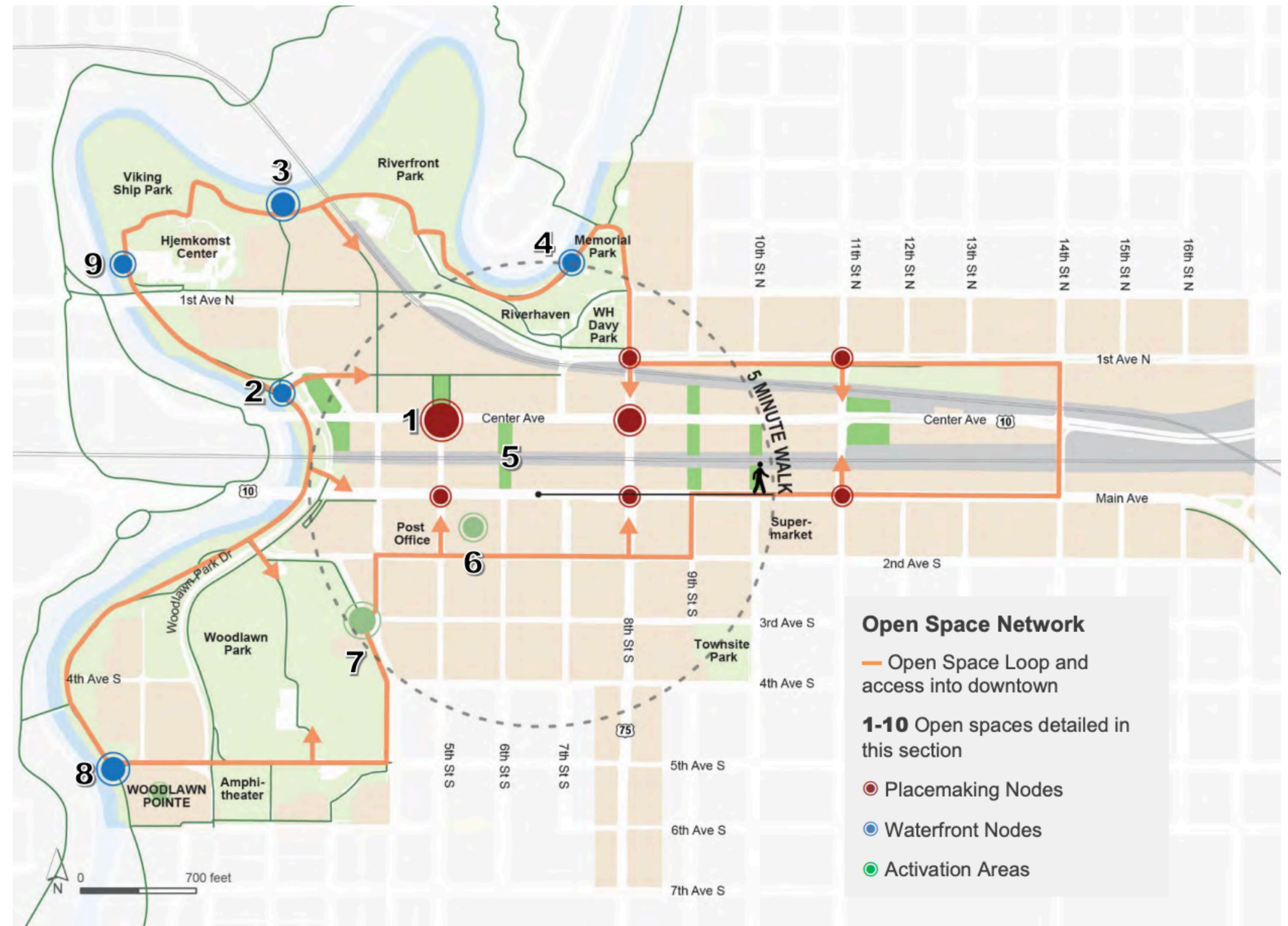
Center Ave & 4th Street looking east

MOORHEAD DOWNTOWN PLAN

Open Space Networks



1. Downtown Plaza
2. River Front Plaza
3. Riverfront Overlook
4. Riverfront Node
5. Railroad Parks
6. Rourke Parklet
7. Woodlawn Park Entrance
8. Woodlawn Pointe Park
9. Downtown Riverfront Plaza



ARTS, CULTURE, AND PLACEMAKING



Goal 6.4 Invest in placemaking and creating places where people want to gather, with a focus in the downtown and riverfront areas.

- a) Support the planning, development, and partnership opportunities relating to a new Regional Library/Community Center Destination.
- b) Explore the creation of a Special Service District to support promotion, placemaking, enhanced maintenance and cleanliness in downtown Moorhead.
- c) Audit and improve street vending and performance policies to invite more food vendors, creatives and artists to the downtown and riverfront areas.
- d) Establish designated food vendor and performance spaces.
- e) Explore and seek funding for downtown art and experience-marketing opportunities.
- f) Fund and support unique placemaking ideas and events.
- g) Establish a signage and wayfinding plan including parks, open space, river trails, neighborhood amenities and cultural nodes. Ensure signage is accessible for all types of mobility.

The arts and culture scene in Moorhead is part of what makes the city a great place to live, work and play. The City has intentionally fostered partnerships and organizations that enhance the vibrancy of Moorhead. The sections below describe the efforts the City has taken to build on its strong cultural resources.

As Moorhead moves into the next decade, community arts, culture, placemaking, and quality of life will continue to be key to the vibrancy and livability of the community.

Arts and culture already play a central role in the community's sense of identity. The Rourke Art Museum in Downtown Moorhead, Theatre B in North Moorhead, Bluestem Center for the Arts, and the Hjemkomst Center on the river, home of the Historical Society and more recently the Fargo-Moorhead Community Theater, are anchors of Moorhead's arts and culture network. In addition to more traditional theater arts and visual arts, Moorhead has started to explore placemaking through community projects like murals, traffic signal boxes, Stick Garden, and the Viking Ship Park Light Tunnel.

Celebrating Moorhead as a city along the river will involve more support, investment, and leadership from City leaders and partners as new and old initiatives work to promote this place. Success will occur through a strong vision and invitation to individuals and businesses to be involved in developing events, programs, pop-ups, and more.



Mary's Tunnel, Viking Ship Park (Credit: InForum)



56560 Mural by Mara Morken (Credit: City of Moorhead)



Game on sidewalk during Design Week

MOORHEAD PLACEMAKING + EXPERIENCE MARKETING UPDATE



MARY'S TUNNEL



FOREST FRIENDS

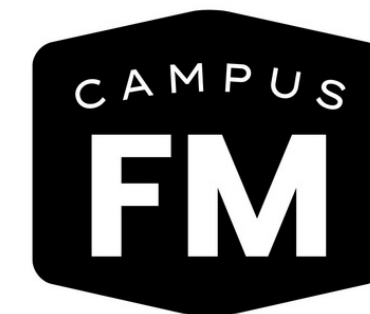




FOLKWAYS
YOU BELONG HERE

OUR MISSION

Folkways creates experiences
where you belong.





SUNSET

On The Riverfront



SUNSET On The Riverfront

Now in September, with a focus on engaging college students as they return for the school year and families as they start their fall routines.



FIREPITS WITH S'MORES



ADULTS OR KIDS MAKE AND TAKE

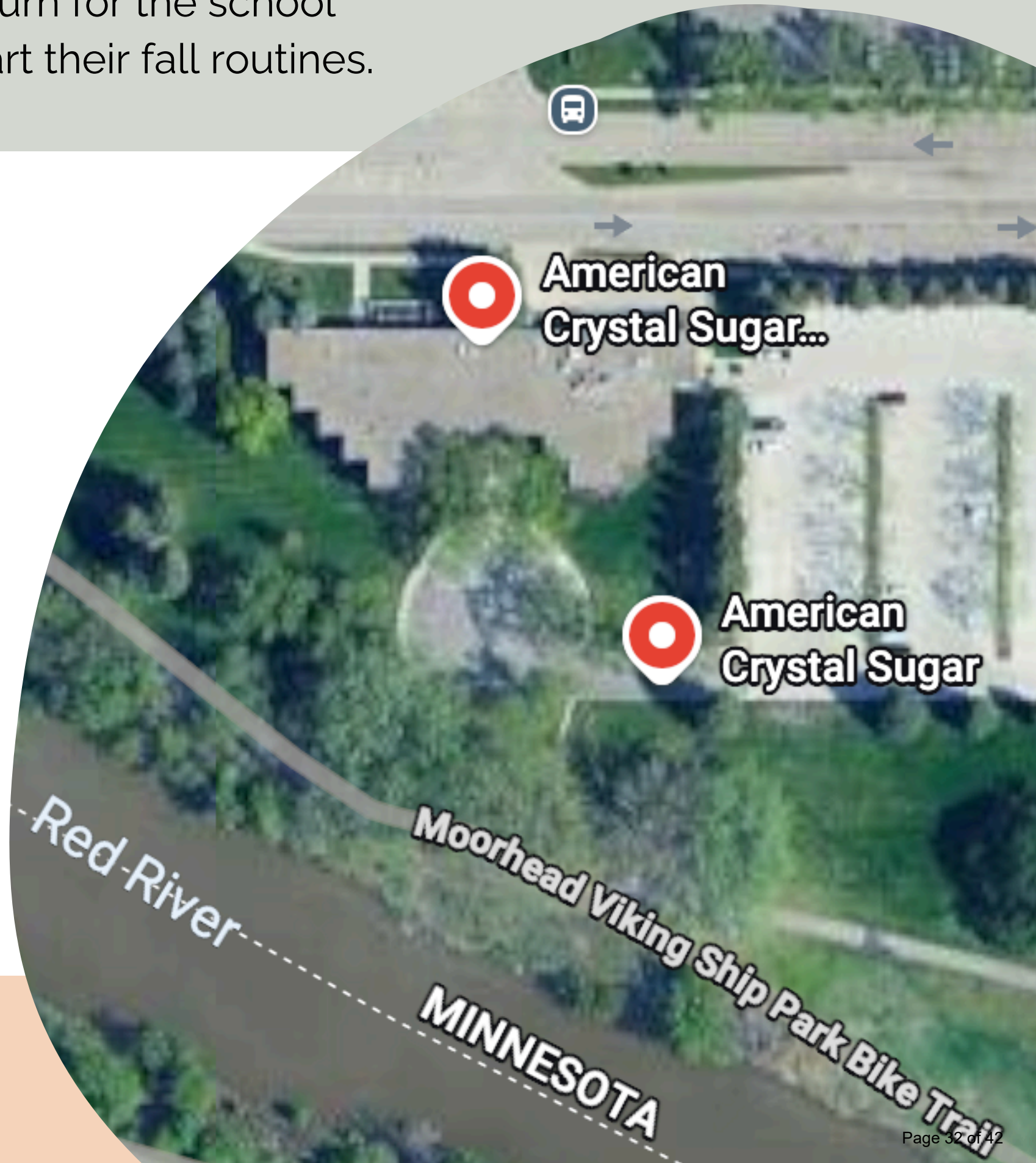


LOCAL VENDORS + FOOD TRUCKS



LIVE MUSIC, BEVERAGES, AND MORE

THURSDAY, SEP 10



ECONOMIC IMPACT

- 47 vendors
- \$11,164



SUNSET

On The Riverfront



FOLKWAYS
YOU BELONG HERE



QUESTIONS?



FOLKWAYS
YOU BELONG HERE



FOLKWAYS
YOU BELONG HERE

Memorandum

To: EDA Board Members
From: Lisa Bode, Governmental Affairs Director
Date: June 1, 2026
Re: **Branding Downtown**



Background & Key Points

The Governmental Affairs team was tasked with researching and recommending a name and brand for the downtown redevelopment. As we undertook this process, we considered cities in our region and beyond that have named business/mixed use districts.

Our neighbors in West Fargo and Dilworth have successfully launched business districts in recent times; West Fargo has The Lights District and Dilworth has The Rail District. Around the metro, both are well received and the public has a good concept of where these areas are. Both have connections to what is existing/real, and that's what we believe Moorhead wants for our downtown. We played around with combinations of Center (because of the adjacency to Center Avenue) and Loop and explored other ideas as well.

After a thorough review, our recommendation is The Loop District. Caleb provided design concepts based on The Loop logo (*thank you Caleb!*), and here is the team's recommendation:



Additional thoughts and considerations:

- Simple, easy to remember, and one-word descriptors are playing well in the marketplace.
- Recognizes The Loop | Library as the civic heart of our city/downtown. The word District should be used when referring to the greater area to distinguish it from the library community center, but both will get you to the neighborhood. Note that The Lights is also an area within The Lights District.
- Builds off the regional and statewide media coverage we've received since opening The Loop; including one Forum article where the reporter called the library the first building to be built in The Loop. **The connection is forming naturally.**
- Chicago also has a Loop District, which is the largest business district outside of Manhattan. Wouldn't it be just too bad if our business district got confused with Chicago's?! Minneapolis also has the North Loop Neighborhood.
- We decided against including Center; besides making the name longer, it reminds us a bit of the Center Mall, and it may be a long time before that's seen as a positive connotation.

Motion

A motion to name and brand the Downtown Center District (as identified in the Downtown Master Plan) as "**The Loop District**" for the purpose of marketing and communications.

Branding Downtown

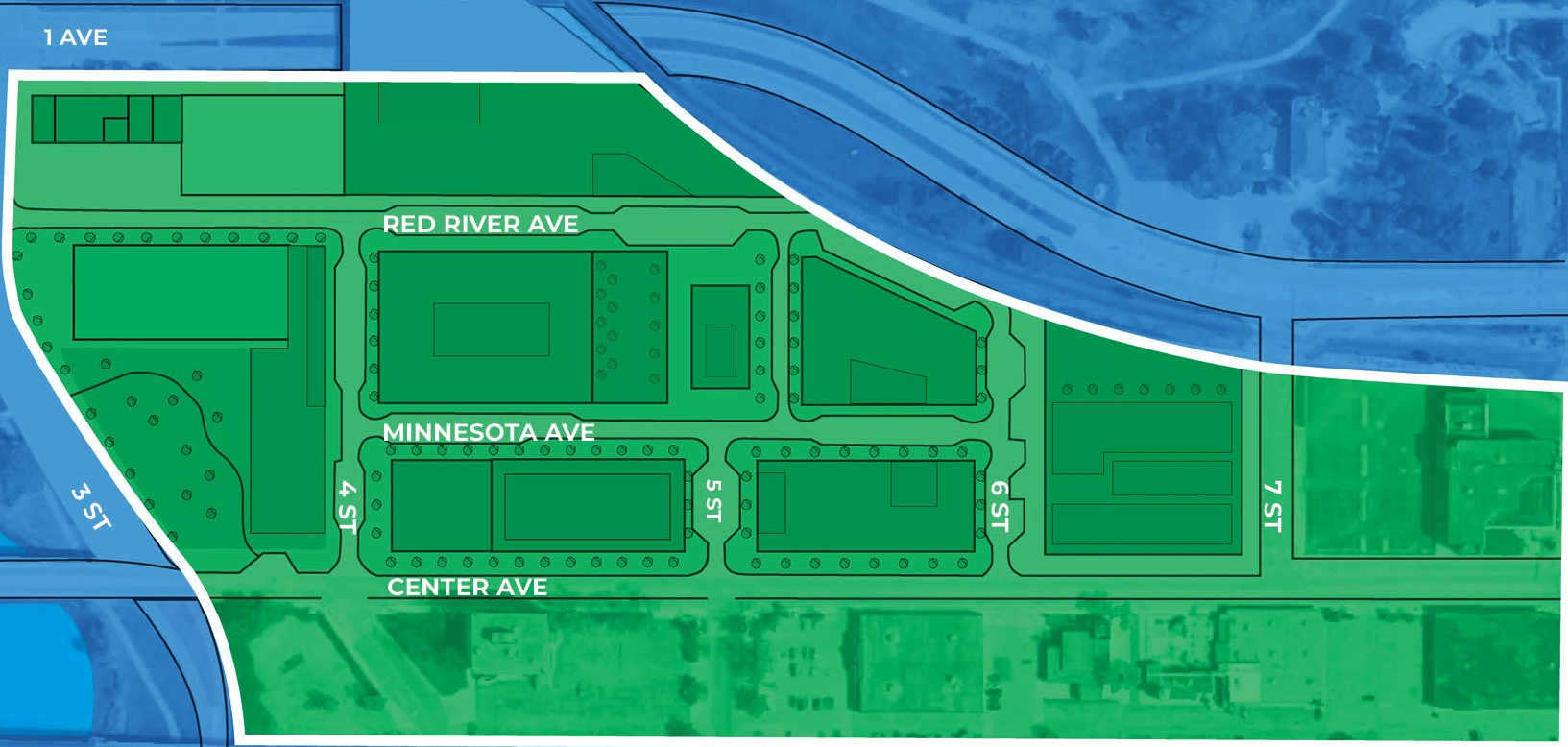
Lisa Bode, Governmental Affairs Director





**THE LOOP
DISTRICT**

THE LOOP DISTRICT



Economic Development Report

Matt Leiseth



Monthly Highlights

Downtown Moorhead Redevelopment

Essentia Health is finalizing their Renaissance Zone application for their reimagined health care space. Their goal is to gain Council approval in July so they can start construction in early September. I can't wait for everyone to see their concept drawings; the building and interior spaces look great.

We have been working with Jessica Thommasson, Convergent Strategy Partners, to develop total district and block by block strategy for the downtown TIF district. The tools that have been developed will help guide our decision making, by understanding the development goals of the district and how each block needs to contribute to financial goals through a mix of housing, retail, commercial and parking needs.

We continue to receive many inquiries about the downtown redevelopment plan. Residents, businesses, and prospective developers are encouraged to visit the project website [More To Moorhead](#) for updates and resources.

The Loop | Spark Center for Entrepreneurship

The Spark Center has held a few events held at The Loop. Spark School: Claiming & Optimizing Your Google Business Profile and Spark Bites: Meet Local Experts. Stacia Sytsma and I attend the Meet Local Experts session that included many of the local organizations that support businesses from inception to business plans, financing and post opening. I attended the first Entrepreneurs Happy Hour that was held at The Starbird Lounge. It was a great opportunity for new and potential businesses owners to get together. They shared their stories about their start-up and made connections that will be mutually beneficial for all attendees.

GFMEDC

I attended the **GFMEDC Business Development Working Group** on May 18th. The group included local economic development from the surrounding area, city leaders, NDSU, developers, bankers and local businesses. The GFMEDC shared their tools with the group and the discussion focused on what area employers are looking for and what this area can do to attract businesses from outside of the area.

North Dakota Today

Sean Brandenburg, Director of Parks and Recreation and I had the opportunity to be on KVLV's North Dakota Today to talk about the exciting things happening in Moorhead this year. We were able to highlight the new Romkey Park, Matson Field and downtown redevelopment.

11th Street Underpass

The first in-person Coffee & Construction Public Meeting was held on May 18th. All of the construction partners provided updates on the progress of the underpass. All lanes on Main Avenue and 1st Avenue North have remained open throughout the winter. Center Avenue will stay closed as the remaining portion of the underpass is completed in 2026. We anticipate reopening the full underpass by late fall. Residents and businesses are encouraged to follow project [MnDOT updates online](#) and sign up for email notifications. For questions, the project hotline is **218.292.8779**.

Center Avenue Construction

With Center Avenue construction (8th Street to 10th Street) while timing has yet to be confirmed (likely July and August), we are discussing the best ways to stage the construction to limit the impact on the businesses. Conversations about communication, signage, detours and collaboration with Greater MBA are in the works.

First Avenue North Construction

The planning continues, as all of the feedback from impacted businesses, owners and citizens is being incorporated into the final construction plan. This will most likely be a 2028-2029 project.

White Earth Casino

Meetings continue to be held with the White Earth Nation about the proposed casino and hotel project. White Earth has released the economic impact to the public for review. Their next step is preparing an environmental impact report that is being conducted by Moore Engineering.

City Council Action – Approved or Pending

- TBD – Renaissance Zone Application – Essential Health

Upcoming “Spark Center” Events

- June 3 | 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – FastTrac Plan it! Entrepreneurship Course – For Startups and Early-Stage Businesses. This is a 12-week immersive course.
- June 10 | 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. – Spark Bites: Choosing a Legal Structure for your Business.

For more information, go to the Spark Center website at: <https://www.moorheadmn.gov/business-development/spark-center-for-entrepreneurship/>